WORKS IN PROGRESS

VOLUME 10, NUMBER 2 | THURSTON COUNTY RAINBOW COALITION | JUNE 1999

"The greatest form of sanity that anyone can exercise is to resist that force that is trying to repress, oppress, and fight down the human spirit." Mumia Abu-Jamal

Affirmation at Neah Bay

Jerome Johnson

"I get so tired of non-Indians telling us how and how not to be Makah."
—Wayne Johnson, 21 May 1999

"Save a whale — harpoon a Makah."
—Protester's sign, Seattle, 17 May 1999

I understand that there are some animal-rights activists who are not racist, who are genuinely concerned about the whales. I'm sorry they've been so silent in the face of the current controversy.

This month, I write to commemorate the Makahs' resumption of whaling tradition. I was at work when the Makah took their whale last Monday morning. Like millions all over the Pacific Northwest, I saw it live on TV. As someone who is not only black but also part Choctaw, as well as Irish and Scottish, I would like to express my appreciation at the re-affirmation of not only the Makahs' culture, but the resurgence of Native American energy throughout the continent in the past few years.

The context is important. This resurgence of Native America began in Canada a few years ago, when the Inuit people received autonomy. At the same time, and in following years, we've seen casino gambling bring prosperity to many Native reservations. At a time when crime and gang violence is threatening Native communities more than ever, there is a stronger effort to rebuild those communities by investing in youth. This investment is taking the form of a return to traditions, reviving Native languages, skills and crafts. Especially here in Washington, there has been a lot of activity, from the Makah and Skagit in the north to the Pueblo in the south, in New Mexico, who have recently received remains of their foreparents.

When the Makah began training for the hunt last year, the resistance that culminated in the current backlash began. Like many Native Americans and other people of color, I was outraged by the spectacle of middle/upper-class white folks once again telling us how we should live and follow our traditions. Eco-liberals in their boats like the Sea Shepherd showed their ignorance and racism by using bully tactics to oppose the hunt, while remaining silent and idle as poverty and lack of education plague Native communities every day. The white, privileged eco-liberals literally threaten violence against the Makah, as evidenced by the signs in Seattle during their candlelight vigil on May 17th ("Save the whales-kill a Makah"), while portraying themselves as life-loving peaceful demonstrators. But on the banners, as well as the letters to op-ed pages and calls to TV and radio shows, the raw, naked racism continues to show itself. Native schools all over western Washington have received threats of violence specifically related to the whale hunt. I've heard Native people blamed for the pollution of the environment, the destruction of the salmon and deer and elk, when the reality is precisely the opposite. It was the genocidal advent of "western civilization" and the continuing ravage of capitalism (timber, commercial fishing and other industries) which ruin our Earth and the creatures in it. The atmosphere has become so dangerous that whites as well as Natives and other people of color are at risk. Coast Guard personnel in Washington have been ordered to keep a low profile, wearing their uniforms as little as possible. As guardians of the Makah during the hunt, they too have become potential targets of racist violence. I understand that there are some animal-rights activists who are not racist, who are genuinely concerned about the whales. I'm sorry they've been so silent in the face of the current controversy.

Very simply, whites and other non-Native people need to understand something:

Like it or not, how Native people practice their culture is THEIR business.

Like it or not, no white person has the right — let alone the "privilege" — of telling ANY person of color in this nation how to practice their culture(s). Especially since this hemisphere was conquered by white peoples' violence, genocide, slavery and "manifest destiny" and forced relocations.

Any questions?

In Africa, hesitant peace talks begin in Congo and Sierra Leone.

In Sirte, Arab and African diplomats work to end the embargo against Libya.

In Rabat, Morocco, King Hassan hosts a meeting of human and civil rights activists from around the Islamic world.

In Neah Bay, the FBI begins to investigate threats of terrorist violence against the Makah.

And in Thurston County, in the North Thurston school district, bells ring and kids continue to participate in their education and activities, because a community cares enough to invest in its present and future. ♦

The High Price of Ignoring Teen-Age Fascists

Guerry Hoddersen

On the 110st anniversary of Hitler's birthday, twelve Littleton, Colorado high-school students and one teacher died in a hail of automatic gunfire and shrapnel from home-made bombs. Their executioners were their classmates and neighbors, Dylan Klebold and Eric Harris.

Within hours of the shooting, the national media descended on Littleton, a suburb of Denver, and attempted to answer the question: how did this tragedy happen? An evolving portrait of the killers emerged on TV and in newspapers over the next two weeks.

Klebold and Harris must be seen in a larger social framework than that provided by their family histories, school problems or wardrobe preferences.

At first, they were described as intelligent, hardworking, relatively law-abiding computer nerds. Soon a more sinister picture emerged. The boys were "misfits," leaders of a Trenchcoat Mafia that listened to German rock music and hated jocks and people of color. They wore clothes with Nazi insignia. They made death threats to other students. Klebold kept a diary filled with racist, anti-Semitic and Nazi references. And they singled out Isaiah Shoels, an African American athlete, and shot him in the face during their murderous rampage at the school. They also picked out Kyle Velasquez for execution.

TV commentators urged the public to listen to their children and to learn how to recognize the warning signs of psychiatric illnesses in teenagers. President Clinton and Ceasefire renewed their calls for gun control. Preachers exhorted parents to "take responsibility" for their families. School administrators considered outlawing trenchcoats.

Lost in the rush for quick fixes is the realization that the teenaged killers in Littleton, Colorado had a political illness, not a psychiatric one. They were adolescent fascists, set on the path to destruction by a well-funded international adult movement.

Their rampage is not the first of its kind. In 1980, a youth named Gundolf Kohler walked into an Oktoberfest beer garden in Munich and detonated a bomb that killed dozens of people and injured more than 200.

Kohler was a member of the Hoffman Militia, a German version of the survivalist militias in the U.S.

In 1992, two young Nazi skinheads firebombed the home of a Turkish family in Molin, Germany. Two children and their grandmother died in the blaze. The youthful killers in this case had been in contact with an American neo-Nazi group.

After the Molin deaths, Ingo Hasselbach, a former Nazi recruiter in eastern Germany, renounced white supremacism. He wrote in the New York Times (April 26, 1995) "...extremist groups in America and Europe create a climate through printed propaganda and computer networks that encourage young people who might be antisocial to go over the edge and commit violent acts...The right wing... movement is a loose network of people with a great deal of hatred and potential for violence, and all over the world they are constantly exchanging information. Indoctrination is a slow, careful process, in which leaders like I used to be incite newcomers step-by-step."

Klebold and Harris must be seen in a larger social framework than that provided by their family histories, school problems or wardrobe preferences. They were the ideal cannon fodder for grown-up Nazis. Scapegoated and abused at their high school, they looked, consciously or unconsciously, for an ideology that put them on top, that gave them power. And they found it in neo-Nazi German rock music and the ideology of white supremacy. Klebold, whose great-grandfather was Jewish, separated himself from this heritage in his embittered need to be superior to someone.

These are not the first politically motivated murders in Colorado. In 1984, Alan Berg, a Jewish talk-show host, was gunned down outside his home by members of The Order of the Silent Brotherhood, an Aryan Nations offshoot. In 1997, over a one-week period, racist Denver skinheads executed an African immigrant at a bus stop, shot and paralyzed a nurse who came to his aid; and also ambushed and killed a policeman.

Among the far-right groups and spokespeople who call Colorado home are:
•The Coors family which bankrolls National Empowerment Television, whose director William Lind has noted "...if we are going to rescue our culture, we need a lot more hate."
•Focus on the Family, which played a major role in the passage of anti-gay Amendment 2.
•The Posse Comitatus whose members were arrested in 1982 for conspiring to kill two federal judges and to blow up the IRS building in Denver.

(Continued page 11)

WORKS IN PROGRESS

Works In Progress is a community newspaper sponsored by the Thurston County Rainbow Coalition. Opinions expressed do not necessarily reflect those of the Rainbow Coalition or the Workers In Progress and are solely those of the authors.

Submissions:

Correspondence, articles, art, and photographs are always welcome.. Please, when possible, put articles on a 3.5" IBM-compatible disk (text preferred) or via e-mail. Artwork and photos should be camera-ready/black & white.

WIP reserves the right to publish in whole or part all submissions. For editing purposes, please enclose your phone number. Articles may be reprinted. Please cite source.

If you don't see your issue being covered in Works In Progress, it's because you aren't writing about it! (Or aren't finding someone else to cover it!)

Send submissions to Works In Progress, PO Box 295, Olympia, WA 98507-0295, wip@ olywa.net

Back Issues:

Get your catalog of indexed WIPs below. Some back issues are available in the Olympia Timberland Library. WIP is being archived on microfilm by the UW Library.

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Mission Statement:

"Our aim is to confront injustice and encourage a participatory democracy based on economic, social, and environmental justice. Works In Progress is dedicated to providing a voice for those most affected by the exclusionary and unfair practices that seek to silence the oppressed."

Anti-Discrimination Clause:

We will collectively endeavor to be sensitive and respectful to all those oppressed in this society, and their issues. However, if and when we should make a mistake in this regard, we expect to acknowledge it and to express regret for injury or insult given.

Governing Tool:

The following statement will become part of the Editorial Policy and will be the governing tool for the Anti-Discrimination Clause: *WIP will make every effort to work with the contributor of material considered by WIP to be offensive in order to reach a mutually agreed upon resolution, but WIP reserves the right as a last resort to edit or not print submitted material.*

WIP Schedule

Submission Deadline:

Friday, June 18th

6pm at Olympia Center Lobby

Proofreading Meeting

Tuesday, June 22nd
7pm at the Olympia Library

WORKS IN PROGRESS:
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phone/fax (360) 705-2726
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Letters & Briefs

US/NATO Out of Yugoslavia

March and Rally Saturday, June 5th

1pm March begins at Victor Steinbrueck Park, Seattle

3pm Rally with the Serbian community at Westlake Center in Seattle

For more information call 206/547-0952.

(Something local may be organized to coincide with events around the country on the 5th)

Get the facts on Mumia

Free Video Screenings -

Mumia: A Case For Reasonable Doubt

Mumia's Lawyer: Leonard Weinglass

Saturday, June 5th Westside Unitarian Church at 3:30 pm- Find out why Amnesty International, Archbishop Tutu, Maya Angelou, Nelson Mandela, The EU, dozens of celebrities, hundreds of church groups, unions, teachers , students and community groups are calling for a new trial.

See for yourself what the issues are in his case, rather than relying on hearsay. Find out how you can help if you want to.

North on Division Street, Left on 20th/ Elliott at the Handy Pantry, Right on East End, Church is at the end of street.

In Search of the Big Picture Video Group

The Fellowship of Reconciliation and the Labor Party are putting together a night of videos at Traditions Fair Trade. The idea is to have an interesting and easy way to learn about what life is like for people around the world, and close by, by watching some of the really wonderful documentaries and programs made by people wanting to get their message out. **It's to be a monthly event, third Tuesday of the month. The first event is June 15 at 7:00pm**. We'll have a number of videos to choose from and catalogues of well made videos to order. Hope to see you there!

STREET PARTY

JUNE 12th - DOWNTOWN OLYMPIA - 3:21PM

PLANNING MEETINGS:
Tuesdays, 7:30,
Bread & Roses, 114 Cherry St.
we need lots of help

Reclaim the Streets - Olympia at www.tao.ca/~oshan/rts/ or olyrts@tao.ca

Stop The Bombing Vigils

The Olympia Fellowship of Reconciliation (and many other folks) hold weekly vigils against the bombings on Kosovo and the sanctions against Iraq downtown across from Percival Landing (at the fountain) on **Fridays from 4:30-5:30pm**.

Bring a sign! Bring your voice! Bring some creativity!

Welfare Rights Organizing Coalition

WROC's planning and organizing meetings take place the **first Tuesday of each month from 5:30pm until 8pm at First United Methodist Church**, 5th and Boundary, downtown. WROC's support and information meeting is the third Tuesday of the month at Evergreen Vista Apartments, on the West Side of Olympia. Dinner and free childcare are provided at all meetings, and people can call 352-9716 for more info.

Tenants' Union

Come and learn your rights as a tenant on the **second Monday (June 14th) of each month starting at 6pm in the downtown Olympia Library.** This is free public clinic. Also a meeting will follow and you will find out how to volunteer for the organization. For more information call 956-9235.

Coalition of Low-Income Power

CLIP is planning a garage sale fundraiser later this summer and is seeking donations of quality used goods to sell. If you have something to donate please call 956-9235. CLIP is the WROC, Tenants Union, TULIP, Enterprise for Equity, Sound Exchange.

Dance O' Dance

Open invitation from "Dance O' Dance" to any age, any style dancers to appear LIVE on public-access television in Thurston county. This hour-long program by and for dancers is taped on the fourth Wednesday of each month and re-runs every Wednesday at 4pm & Friday at 10pm on channel 29. "Dance O' Dance" is in its fourth season on TCTV.

Upcoming shows will be on June 23rd, July 28th, August 25th, & September 22nd.

Dancers should arrive at TCTV studio "A", 440 Yauger way, off Mud Bay, by 2PM for instructions, warm-ups, & refreshments.

Contact the producer for more details: Justin B. Wright, 753-9665, or e-mail <justinb@writeme.com>

Subscription Form

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  - ☐ **Please mail *WIP* to me**
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Make A Statement

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The Capitol Theater in Downtown Olympia

Olympia FILM SOCIETY

To receive a program or get information about shows, show times, locations, and prices call 754-6670.

SOUTH SOUND GREEN PAGES

South Sound's Monthly Environmental Newspaper

Green Pages is a forum for individuals and organizations concerned about the integrity of our environment and the quality of life in our community.

209 East 4th Ave., Suite 206
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JUNE 1999

Genetically Engineered Foods

Genetic engineering of foods involves the insertion of genes from plants, bacteria, insects, fish, animals or humans into the DNA of another plant, fish, or animal to create a new variety.

Petition campaign to secure rigorous pre-market safety testing and mandatory labeling of genetically engineered foods.

P.O. Box 1177
Fairfield Iowa 52556
Phone: (515) 472-2809
www.safe-food.org/-campaign

Consumer Right to Know Hotline:
(877) REAL-FOOD

Sources: Campaign for Food Safety www.purefood.org
Mothers for National Law www.safe-food.org

WHAT ARE THE DANGERS?

Those identified so far include:

- **New toxins and allergens in foods (Some genetically engineered crops produce their own pesticides and are actually classified as pesticides by the EPA)**
- **Increased use of chemicals on crops that are genetically altered to endure herbicides, resulting in increased contamination of our water supply and food**
- **The creation of herbicide-resistant weeds**
- **The spread of diseases across species barriers**
- **Loss of bio-diversity in crops**
- **The disturbance of ecological balance**
- **Loss of bio-diversity in crops**
- **The disturbance of ecological balance**
- **Artificially induced characteristics and inevitable side-effects will be passed on to all subsequent generations and to other related organisms. Once released, they can never be recalled or contained.**

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
MARCH S M T W T F S 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31	MAY S M T W T F S 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31	**1** **1919**: Germany: Rosa Luxemburg found in Canal **1997**: FBI reports violent crime drops 5th year in a row	**2** **1998**: India tells the world's 5 original nuclear powers to get rid of their own arsenals rather than preach abstinence	**3** **1963**: World mourns death of Pope John XXIII **1996**: Supreme Court upholds military's death penalty	**4** **1998**: Mariner's ballpark named Safeco Field for $417 million **1998**: O.P.D fires another officer for misconduct	**5** **1998**: Reno says federal drug agents won't arrest MDs who help terminially ill paitients die in Oregon
6 **1998**: U.N. Security Council demands India/Pakistan stop nuclear tests, halt weapons programs and sign agreements	**7** **1997**: Presidential advisory panel recommends any attempt to clone a human child be outlawed for 3 to 5 years	**8** **1998**: Locke announces state will sue U.S. Department of Energy to cleanup Hanford Nuclear Reservation	**9** **1998**: Pentagon to reduce ground-fighting units 13 % **1998**: 700 gallons of sealant washes into Capitol Lake	**10** **1905**: Santo Domingo rejects U S control over economic affairs **1998**: Olympia rated as West's 3rd most livable small city	**11** **1998**: The Washington State Supreme Court strikes down a law which had banned false political advertising	**12** **1996**: U.S. Congress was two votes short of ending $25 million federal subsidy for the tobacco industry.
13 **1966**: Supreme Court hands down Miranda Decision **1998**: State Fish and Wildlife Director Bern Shanks resigns	**14** **1998**: Researchers report that there had been an 9 percent increase of diabetes type II per year between 1987 and 1996	**15** **1998**: Supreme Court rules state prisons must make reasonable accommodations for inmates who are disabled	**16** **1936**: Olympic National Park created **1998**: In reaction to Asia's economic crisis, the Dow drops 207 points	**17** **1775**: Black soldiers fight at the Battle of Bunker Hill and Breed's Hill (1,054 British casualties, 441 American)	**18** **1998**: Researchers announce they understand the structure of a protein that allows the AIDS virus to enter white blood cells	**19** **1964**: 1964 Civil Rights Act passes **1998**: Kaiser, the U.S. largest HMO, announces it will not pay for Viagra
20 **1954**: The United Nations Security Council seeks end of hostilites in Guatemala, asks nations to not aid invaders	**21** **1998**: Arson fires destroy two USDA facilities in Thurston County and three years worth of animal research	**22** **1998**: Supreme Court rules that molestation of students must be known and ignored for a shcool to be liable	**23** **1964**: The burned empty station wagon of the three missing civil rights workers found near Philadelphia, Mississippi	**24** **1964**: Warning is to be printed on cigarette packages about the dangers of smoking **1998**: AT&T buys TCI for $32 billion	**25** **1998**: Judge throws out O.P.D. charge against a man for not having a litter bag **1998**: Supreme Court tosses line-item veto	**26** **1998**: Supreme Court rules employers can be forced to pay damages to workers sexually harassed by low-level supervisor
27 **1996**: Billy Frank, Jr. named to Evergreen's board of trustees **1998**: Clinton lectures China about it human rights record	**28** **1996**: Pres. panel discloses CIA employed Guatemalan informants they knew were involved in torture and murders	**29** **1972**: Supreme Court bans death penalty **1998**: Report says women more likely to die after heart bypass surgery	**30** **1995**: Secretary of the Interior Babbitt said American peregrine falcon is ready to be taken off federal endangered species list	**In 1989 and 1990, a genetically engineered brand of L-tryptophan, a common dietary supplement, killed more than 30 Americans and permanently disabled or afflicted more than 5,000 others with a potentially fatal and painful blood disorder, eosinophilia myalgia syndrome, before it was recalled by the FDA.**		

Along the Color Line

Racial Profiling: A Nationwide Crisis

Dr. Manning Marable

The murder of Amadou Diallo, an unarmed black man, by four police officers in the Bronx last February has now become well known throughout the world. The firing of 41 bullets at Diallo was only the most recent publicized example of police misconduct in New York City. Black and Latino New Yorkers could easily recite the names of other prominent victims: Haitian immigrant Abner Louima, brutalized by Brooklyn police in 1997; Anthony Baez, shot to death by police when his football accidentally struck a police car; and Eleanor Bumpers, an older African-American woman gunned down by cops in her own home.

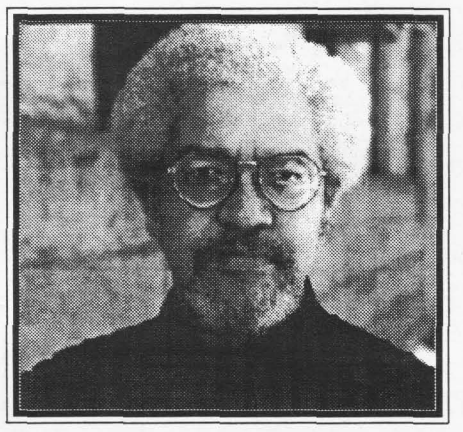
Beyond these publicized examples of police brutality is a much larger problem of racially-motivated "profiling" by law enforcement officials. In cities like New York, white cops routinely harass and stop African Americans and Latinos without cause. The New York Police Department's Street Crimes Unit, whose officers were responsible for the killing of Diallo, has admitted to stopping and frisking 27,000 New Yorkers in 1998 alone. Only 4,600 of the individuals who were detained and searched were actually arrested. Experts estimate the real number of individuals who were frisked may exceed 100,000. In effect, the cops based their actions on "racial profiling": an officer could "reasonably suspect" a person of committing criminal acts if that individual was black or brown. Thousands of racial minorities, most of whom have never been charged or convicted of any crime, are routinely subjected to this kind of intimidation.

Evidence showed that black motorists were almost five times more likely to be stopped: in other words, they were guilty of "driving while black."

According to figures from the New York City Comptroller's office, from July 1993 to June 1997, new claims of police misconduct rose by 45 percent. During this same period, payments by the city in police brutality cases rose 38 percent. In fiscal year 1997, New York City paid out $27.5 million to settle court damages created by police violence.

In New Jersey, the state police have practiced racial profiling for decades. Back in 1993, African-American state troopers filed a complaint with the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, with eight of them testifying before Congress, presenting evidence of racist policies and practices by the state police. Authorities dismissed them as "malcontents". In 1996, New Jersey Superior Court Judge Robert E. Francis ruled that the state police practiced race-based stops at highways, violating the constitutional rights of racial minorities. Evidence showed that black motorists were almost five times more likely to be stopped: in other words, they were guilty of "driving while black."

This February, the New Jersey State Police Superintendent Carl A. Williams generated a firestorm of criticism by making crude remarks lining racial and ethnic groups with illicit drugs and criminality. Governor Christie Todd Whitman jettisoned Williams, but continued to deny that her cops engaged in systemic racial profiling. But on April 20, New Jersey Attorney General Peter G. Verniero released a comprehensive study proving all of the allegations of police misconduct. State officers had deliberately falsified information about the racial identities of drivers they had stopped to cover up their racist actions. On one section of the New Jersey turnpike, investigators found that 34 percent of all stops involved Latinos and blacks. Only about 1 percent of all stops led to vehicle searches. But African American and Latinos represented more than three-fourths of all searches.



Once black people are ensnared into the criminal justice system they routinely experience the same racial profiling in the courts. According to studies of the U.S. Commission of Civil Rights, black Americans constitute only 15 percent of the nation's drug users, but comprise about one-third of all those arrested on drug charges and 57 percent of those convicted on drug charges. Once they are convicted of drug charges, African Americans receive one year more in prison than whites.

Uprooting the practices of racial harassment and profiling will take more than the release of government studies and media investigations. The problem won't go away until the city and state police forces reflect the actual racial and ethnic composition of the citizens they are hired to "protect and serve."

Dr. Manning Marable is Professor of History and Director of the Institute for Research in African-American Studies at Columbia University, New York City. "Along the Color Line" is distributed free of charge and regularly appears in over 325 black and progressive publications worldwide. ♦

Ring Out the Debt!

David Holtzman

Have five years of grassroots campaigning finally placed the onerous debt of Third World nations on the radar screen of the advanced industrial nations? It seems so, looking at the agenda for the annual meeting of the world's eight economic powerhouses, to be held in June in Cologne, Germany.

The pressure from the grassroots came from Jubilee 2000, a campaign to cancel the $2,171.4 billion debt Third World governments owe the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and private banks by the year 2000. British activists kicked off the effort in the mid-90s, inspired by the Bible's book of Leviticus, chapter 25:10, which says debtors and indentured servants should be given their property and livelihood back every 50 years so they can start anew. Theirs is an abolition movement likening the burden of Third World debt--totaling a third of their combined economic output--to slavery. The idea caught fire, receiving the blessing of religious leaders, including Pope John Paul II.

Theirs is an abolition movement likening the burden of Third World debt--totaling a third of their combined economic output--to slavery.

In 1996, the IMF and the World Bank created a category of Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) that could be eligible for debt relief. The move may have been a preemptive strike against the effort for wiping the state clean, as Jubilee 2000 leaders want.

"They launched the HIPC as a solution to the debt crisis. The difference between that and the call for cancellation is that the HIPC is still within the neoliberal framework," said Njoki Njehu, director of 50 Years is Enough, a Washington, D.C. coalition dedicated to global economic justice. The IMF and the World Bank provide debt relief only if the country implements their destabilizing economic restructuring programs which have forced borrowing from speculative financial markets.

By last September, only seven of some 40 eligible countries were slated for help. Two of these, Uganda and Mozambique, may see few immediate changes in their economic outlook. Uganda left the embrace of the HIPC initiative in April 1988, yet, Njehu says, the low price it receives for coffee exports negates any aid in the debt relief provided. The IMF told Mozambique it must raise hospital user fees by five times in order to qualify for the program.

The countries pay their foreign debts in foreign currency earned by selling exports. The IMF defines a country's debt as "sustainable" if its debt payments total no more than 25% of its export earnings, leaving 75% of the foreign currency to buy needed imports. At a March review of HIPC in Washington, an IMF official admitted the figure was taken from thin air, reports Njehu. It's a "one size fits all" policy that ignores the cost to job creation, social investment and the environment.

There is no guarantee that canceling Third World debts will result in a dawn of new economic systems that empower farmers and small business owners instead of financiers. And it lumps all loans, good and bad, together. But the alternative, keeping countries shackled with their debts, appears to be losing credibility.

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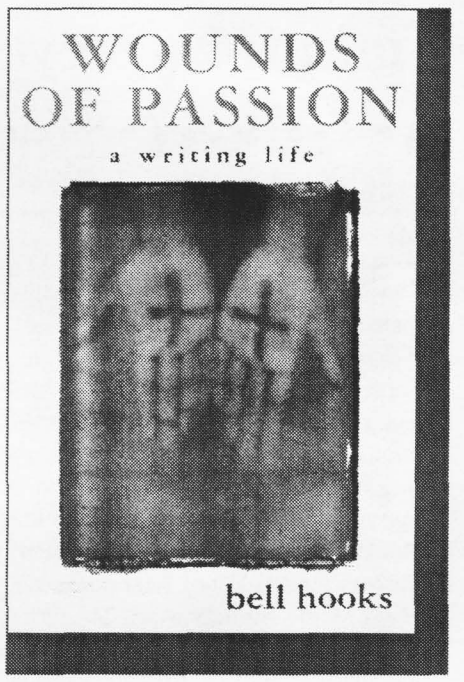
Scorching Summer Reading



Wendy C. Ortiz

***Wounds of Passion: A Writing Life* by bell hooks. New York: Owl Books, 1999.**

Cast aside all academically-minded theoretical minutia for a moment. Set down all your previous notions of the bell hooks you know and love from either political economy classes or all night discussions with your friends. What you have in *Wounds of Passion* is prose poem to the tune of the life of hooks, her writing life and how it came into being.

The preface to this book not only summarizes the content of the book, but also acknowledges that some readers will have to stretch to receive this experimental memoir. hooks points out that she uses non-linear storytelling to tell her story of how she went from her family to her life in academia, her myriad of relationships, and the long-lasting partnership she cultivated with Mack—to the writing life that she cultivated throughout these lifetimes.

A reader can decide whether or not experimental memoirs are their reading of choice. At times it was challenging to read a story that had so many threads woven but felt like it would jump to the next pattern, or unweave one piece to tell it anew. But hooks expertly tells the stories of her life with bold strokes and intense images that describe her evolution as a writer.

I appreciated the story of hooks's relationship with Mack, a black male academic, and her partner of over ten years. She describes the struggles between nurturance he would give her as an academic, and then the punishment he would drop on her when she succeeded—her first book, her teaching jobs. hooks deftly outlines the contradictions of such a relationship and does not apologize for them. She acknowledges the importance of their commitment "to nuture and sustain each other" as young black poets, but as she delves further into politics, and feminism, the divide widens. And yet hooks will not simply jot it all down to sexism, which would be the easy way out. For this I appreciate her: her story is not an academic chart of what happens in gender relations among people of color. It is a story of nuances, successes, shortcomings, doubt, love and fears. Poetry and politics play large roles. The reader becomes familiar with the story of a writer who takes jobs so she must write, stays true to herself only to get denied the world of academia, and charts her own route in order to nurture herself and her writing.

***Voices of Color* edited and with an introduction by Yolanda Alaniz and Nellie Wong. Seattle: Red Letter Press, 1999.**

In an effort to put into print the histories of activists of color, *Voices of Color* is a gift. To a woman who has checked out piles of books in order to cull the few stories that would sustain me as a woman of a color and as an activist, I am pleased that this book is out there.

What I am not so pleased about is the narrow focus this book takes. The importance of publicizing the Freedom Socialist Party is not under question, but the essays tend to hold to a dogmatic stance that may end up alienating many readers. Hopefully not.

The introduction does outline some of the political premises that the articles in the book follow. There is a good intro to the cultural nationalism debate, and the Comrades of Color's devotion to a revolution based on class and not race is boldly stated in the introduction and throughout the book.

The thirty-five articles included in this anthology are written by African-American, Chicana/o Asian Pacific American and Native American women and men, organizers and activists. The anthology succeeds in succinctly taking on a large variety of issues that face people of color and their allies, ranging from model minority myths, bilingualism, (imagined and real) tensions between people of color, inclusion of queers in movements of color, indigenous rights, and the depiction (or lack thereof) of people of color in the media.

While I support and wholeheartedly appreciate the existence of this anthology and all the stories it brings, I can't help but question the medium. Because the anthology is made up of articles published in The Freedom Socialist newspaper between 1982—1997, there is sometimes a reliance on the reader to either know or guess the climate of internal politics of the Freedom Socialist Party. There are numerous articles that mention specific intergroup conflicts that led to some people leaving, and others more strongly committed. That's fine; that's what coalition work is about sometimes. But being privy to conflicts and affairs that seem trivialized on the pages of what I see as a historical book seems unfair and at times, unnecessary.

In the end, this anthology is powerful and yet may also lack in reaching a broad spectrum of people of color. My hope is that others pick up this book and decide for themselves whether this anthology will stand the test of time, or become a historical document of the Freedom Socialist Party only.

***Annie Sprinkle's Post-Porn Modernist: My 25 Years as a Multimedia Whore* by Annie Sprinkle. San Francisco: Cleis Press, 1998.**

If you have issues with porn, maybe you should not pick this book up. If you have issues with women charting their own territory, you should likewise not pick up this book.

If you like stories with pictures, and honesty, and humor, this is a good read. If you like sex goddesses, or fancy yourself one, by all means, pick this book up. There are plenty of pictures in this large-format book, but there are missing "naughty" bits, which can be ordered from the publisher. Thank the censors for that.

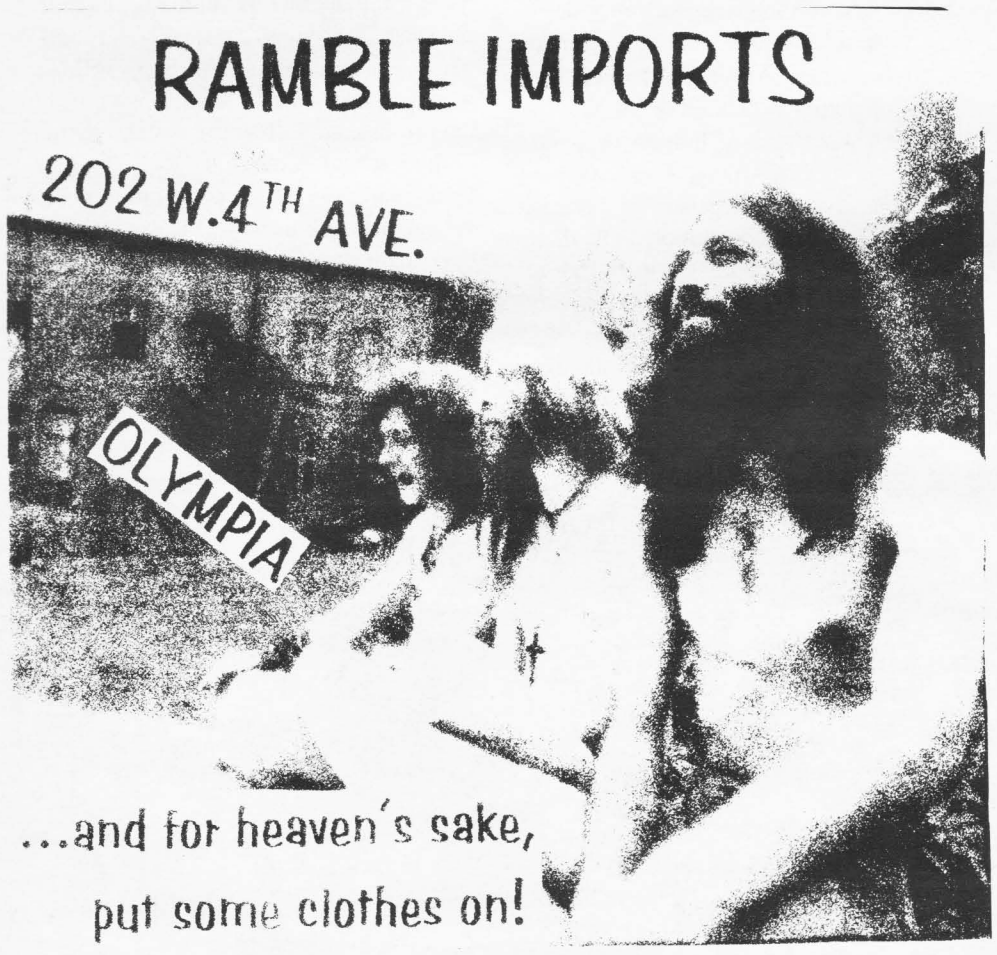
Anyway, my first experience seeing Annie Sprinkle's name was when I was eighteen years old and taking a class through a multi-campused learning center. I think the class had something to do with starting your own coffee bar. The classroom across the way from mine had a sign on it that read, "Annie Sprinkle's How to Be A Sex Goddess 101." I stared at the door for a long time. There were no windows on this classroom. But then I had to get back to finding out about baristas and bank loans, so I left. But her name stuck in my head.

Eight years later, I am the fond owner of this book, which tells the story of the preporn Ellen Steinberg turned Annie Sprinkle. Her book describes an interesting childhood, but none that would foretell her future career choice. Hippie days turned into job-seeking days, and Annie was on her way.

I'm not a fan of all of Annie's types of pornography; there are pages I probably won't go out of my way to look at again, and some I might even avoid. But throughout the photos is the story of a woman who showcases her sexuality with no apologies and few regrets. She moves from your average porn to "post-porn" and "becoming" a performance artist. This book includes a bibliography, filmography, and a listing of performances and workshops that Ms. Sprinkle has given.

According to how you feel about pornography, you may or may not believe me when I write that Annie Sprinkle seems to be more at peace with her sexuality, and more honest about her sexuality, than many people I know. Hmmm. This book can be a teacher for those interested in delving into what is usually considered off-limits to people striving to integrate their sexuality with their whole being. Enjoy! ♦

Check out these titles at your local independent bookstore, or ask your local library to put them on the shelves!



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Fight for a New Trial for Mumia Abu-Jamal!!

Peter Bohmer

Last weekend, my son, Inti, who is 20 and I, who am quite a few years older than that, went to San Francisco to take part in a rally and demonstration in support of political prisoner and death row inmate, Mumia Abu-Jamal. The main demand is for a new trial for Mumia. It was the most powerful and energizing demonstration I have gone to in many years. We were part of a 15,000 person rally who gathered in Dolores Park in the Mission District of San Francisco at 10:30 A.M. on Saturday, April 24th. What was striking was the successful attempt to reach younger and older activists by the speakers and music as well as by the revolutionary content of the message. A speaker that really reached the rally was a college student from Chapman College, Rashard Richardson, who talked of people of all "racial" backgrounds fighting the oppressor and overthrowing capitalism. It reminded me of talks I had heard by the Black Panther Party 30 years ago. Also connecting the 1960's to the present was the reading of a poem, "War Without Terms", written by George Jackson, the author of "Soledad Brother", a legendary California inmate, writer and revolutionary who was killed in San Quentin prison. Many of the presentations were in a late 1990's format—hip hop music, rap, spoken word.

Ed Asner and others pointed out that the demonstrations on this day, April 24th, 1999 were perhaps the largest ever for a political prisoner.

About 12:15 we gathered to march to the Civic Center. It was a sunny and warm day. The drums gave the march energy as did the chants, e.g., "They Say Execution, We Say Revolution". There were contingents representing many constituencies including labor unions, gay and lesbian, Asian-American, Latino/a, anarchists, and many left parties. The demonstration stretched for blocks with thousands of signs calling for an end to the death penalty, for freeing Mumia and all political prisoners, to fighting racism in the criminal justice system, to demanding a new trial for Mumia Abu-Jamal and many, many others. There was a feeling of urgency as the possibility of his execution in the next year by the State of Pennsylvania is very real. I also sensed in the marchers a feeling of hope and strength and a commitment to preventing his execution by the State of Pennsylvania.

It took us about an hour to reach the Civic Center in downtown San Francisco. We marched through many communities, including some that were predominantly African-American. Thousands watched us from their streets and from inside their apartments and houses. The impressive puppets, made by the group, Art and Revolution, drew attention to the march. Leaflets were handed out explaining the many injustices connected to Mumia's conviction and death sentence. There was little hostility by those we marched by but neither was there much enthusiasm or support, rather the tone of those we marched by seemed to vary from indifference to interest in learning why we were marching and who Mumia Abu-Jamal was, but not to the extent of joining us. There is a lot more education to do on this case.

The Speakers

We then gathered at the Civic Center in downtown San Francisco where there were speeches and music until a little past 5 P.M. Some of the highlights included a speech from a member of the Longshoremen's Union, the ILWU. He recounted the history of the struggles of the ILWU from the 1934 strike in San Francisco to the present. The ILWU speaker was especially meaningful as he was backed up by three buses of members who marched, and even more because they announced that they had called for a work stoppage in support of Mumia on the day of the demonstration at all of the ports they worked at from San Diego to San Francisco and Oakland to British Columbia. The speaker announced it was successful. To many of the younger demonstrators I spoke to, during and after the demonstration, the work stoppage greatly increased their consciousness about the potential power of labor and the strength of coalitions for radical social change that included labor unions and workers. Angela Davis read a statement from Alice Walker in solidarity with Mumia and sending him love on his 45th birthday, which was the day of the march. Angela Davis analyzed the racism in the California injustice system where 7% of the population is black but 39% of those on death row are black.

Very notable and positive were the large numbers of youthful speakers who stressed the importance of supporting Mumia and his struggle for a new trial. These speakers were high school and college students from the Bay area, mainly Black—there were also Puerto Ricans and Chicano speakers who linked the struggle for Mumia to others such as the Puerto Rican political prisoners. A statement from Subcomandante Marcos of the EZLN (Zapatistas) was read that wished Mumia a happy birthday, linked the struggles of indigenous people in Mexico to the struggles of people of color in the United States, and included a letter to the Governor of Pennsylvania, Tom Ridge, and the Supreme Court demanding not clemency, pardon or mercy but justice and a new trial for Mumia.

Many speakers also strongly criticized the U.S./NATO bombing of Kosovo. One long-term organizer and friend who is very active against the U.S. War against Yugoslavia lamented in a conversation with me, however, that although thousands and thousands of Bay area resident had turned out for the Mumia march, only a small proportion would turn out for a demonstration against the bombing. She was excited by the turnout, particularly of young people for Mumia, but blamed the left for not speaking out more against the war and mobilizing more against it.

Ed Asner and others pointed out that the demonstrations on this day, April 24th, 1999 were perhaps the largest ever for a political prisoner. They were significantly larger than previous demonstrations for Mumia, which shows the movement in support of him is growing.

The speaker who most moved the crowd, my son, and myself was Michael Franti of the music group, "*Spearhead*". Combining poetry, spoken word and speaking from the heart and brain, Michael Franti spoke about his faith in people to build a movement to free Mumia. He rapped about how the struggle was about Mumia but it was also about much more—it was about challenging the death penalty, it was about challenging the insane system that is imprisoning more and more people, particularly but not limited to African-Americans. Michael Franti talked about how he came to the march to have his consciousness raised and how it was raised by attending. So were my son's and mine.

Who was at the Mumia Demonstration?

The official estimate, which appeared in the major San Francisco paper the next day and on TV was 15,000. This seems about right. Numbers I got from asking people at the demo were between 12,000 and 20,000. I estimate also that maybe ½ were of college age or younger which was very exciting. There was a strong anarchist influence among the young. The demonstration definitely included all ages, from parents bringing babies and their children to many, many seniors. All ethnic and racial groups participated and were represented in more than token numbers, e.g., there was a significant group of marchers behind an Asians for Mumia banner. Although there were substantial numbers of African-Americans participating, I had expected there to be a larger turnout at the demonstration than there was. My rough estimate is that 10-15% of the entire march and rally were African-American.

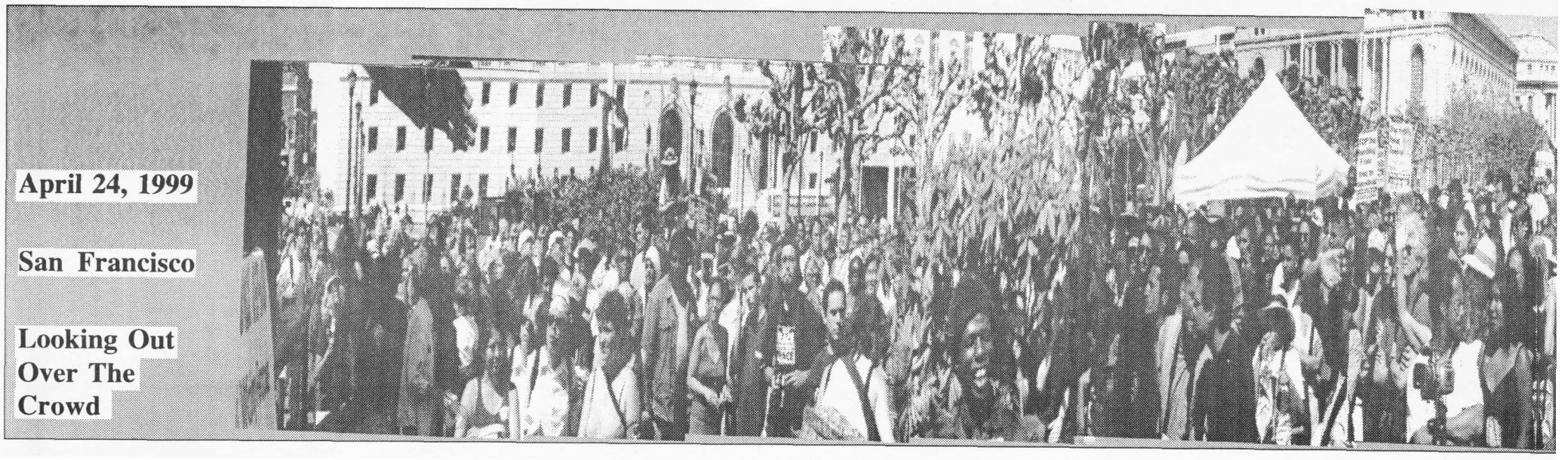
According to two friends who attended the simultaneous demo on April 24th in Philadelphia in support of a new trial for Mumia, the march there was bigger than the one in San Francisco, their estimates were between 25,000 and 35,000 took part. I had expected the Philadelphia demonstration to be much bigger than San Francisco as there were major mobilizations in many cities besides Philadelphia, e.g., New York, Chicago, and at many, many colleges. One friend of mine told me that in Chicago a coalition of groups who had never been able to work together before, cooperated well and got eight buses to go to Philadelphia. I am not sure what limited turnout, although the actual numbers there were certainly substantial. It was a success. From what I heard, the racial and age composition was similar in Philadelphia to San Francisco. Probably because of the greater hostility of the police and city officials in Philly than in San Francisco to the demonstration, the official estimate in Philadelphia was intentionally low—I saw estimates of 3000 and 8000. That was very disheartening to some of the marchers. So was the lack of national coverage. Nevertheless that 40,000 or more people rallied in Philadelphia and San Francisco together is very, very impressive. Hopefully, many of these people like me will be inspired to do more in support of Mumia.

A brief for a new trial was submitted by Mumia's lawyer, Leonard Weinglass, to the U.S. Supreme Court, two days before the demo on April 22nd. The demonstrations, the support for a new trial for Mumia from all over the world, and the growing number of organizations supporting this demand increase the likelihood that the Supreme Court will take this case more seriously. We need to do more, to make it a small part of whatever activities we do.

A Final Note

I was somewhat dismayed that many of my friends in San Francisco, all of whom had been hard core leftist activists in the 1970's, did not attend the demo. Some had very good reasons, others didn't. One could hardly believe that I had come 800 miles just to attend the demonstration for Mumia. What I felt but did not fully express to her was that I didn't want to look back 20 years from now, and feel guilty that I had not done much to save the life of Mumia Abu-Jamal. We owe him and ourselves that. I have spoken to many people of my parents generation who wish they had done more in support of Julius and Ethel Rosenberg before they were executed by the U.S. government in 1953. Let us not repeat the same mistake.

I also realized that unless you are actively challenging this oppressive capitalist system, the mainstream media and dominant culture are so powerful that even those who were leftist activists in the past but not the present, are influenced enough by the dominant institutions that they find many, many reasons not to support Mumia, not to act against the bombing of Kosovo, not to oppose the sanctions in Iraq, etc., etc. It is more than them just feeling powerless, it gives me an appreciation of how easy it is for mainstream viewpoints to take over our minds. ♦



April 24, 1999

San Francisco

Looking Out Over The Crowd

Mumia Abu-Jamal to Speak at the Evergreen State College Commencement Ceremony

by Concerned Students, Faculty, and Staff of the Evergreen State College

On June 11th, the 1999 graduation ceremony at the Evergreen State College (TESC) will include a unique commencement address - a 13-minute audio-recorded speech taped on death row by Mumia Abu-Jamal. Abu-Jamal's presence at this event has provoked a nation-wide debate due to the controversial nature of his case. A renowned journalist and author, Abu-Jamal was convicted of murdering a Philadelphia police officer in 1982 by what his supporters believe to have been a flagrant example of a flawed judicial system. Abu-Jamal's presence at this graduation ceremony indicates a conscious movement across the nation to recognize Mumia as a political prisoner. A radical radio-journalist, he remains an outspoken critic against the death penalty, police brutality, and institutionalized racism.

Abu-Jamal was chosen to speak at TESC's graduation ceremony in January, after the school's administration mistakenly announced that the first choice for commencement speaker, Washington governor Gary Locke, would be unable to attend. The mistake was discovered, and the school found itself with two commencement speakers- a pro-death penalty politician and a man whose death warrant could be signed any day. Locke eventually bowed to pressure from the state police, declining to speak at commencement.

Many community members continue to see Abu-Jamal as he is portrayed in the local media as a "cop killer," and feel angered that he will be speaking at a state college graduation ceremony. Despite educational opportunities on campus to build awareness of the case, misinformation abounds. Facts of the case reveal inconsistencies, police coercion, and racial bias. Stifled by an incompetent defense that was hampered by an openly hostile judge, his attorney did not challenge most of the questionable evidence nor present much of the available evidence favorable to Mumia.

International Mumia supporters like the European Union, Nelson Mandela, Amnesty International, the ACLU, and the International Longshoremen's and Warehousemen's Union (ILWU), as well as over 40,000 US citizens who rallied on April 24, 1999 in Philadelphia and San Francisco, insist that Abu-Jamal be given a new trial. Many graduating students welcome the opportunity to hear Mumia speak as well as to make a strong statement of opposition to an unjust trial. "What does it mean, when he can sit there on death row for 17 years, while more and more evidence of corruption keeps coming up?" asked graduating Evergreen senior Megan Davis. "If this is what our justice system has come to, then something has got to change."

Evergreen promoters of Mumia Abu-Jamal as commencement speaker put forward several reasons for inviting him to speak. Students and faculty have worked to increase public awareness of his case as well as the broader prison crisis in the US where 2 million people are imprisoned, most of whom are, disproportionately, people of color. First, Mumia speaking is an opportunity for TESC to set a precedent among colleges. "It is easier to see injustice in the past than in the present," explained TESC professor Peter Bohmer. "This is a chance for Evergreen to stand up for justice." Second, they view this event as a chance to combat the silence imposed upon the escalating prison population in this country. Abu-Jamal has come to represent, for millions, one person's ability to struggle and maintain strength in the face of shocking injustice. Graduating senior, Stephanie Guilloud states, "Selecting Mumia Abu-Jamal as the graduation speaker is an historic opportunity that will reverberate beyond the walls of this particular institution."

Contact: Stephanie Guilloud or Jennica Born at (360) 866-6000 ext.6879 or epic@elwha.evegreen.edu ♦

Attorney Leonard Weinglass Speaks to Mumia Supporters

Greg Bye

Leonard Weinglass, lead counsel for death row inmate Mumia Abu Jamal, spoke in Portland at Reed's Vollum Lounge, on April 25. He covered much ground in his talk, including an update on Mumia's case, and how Mumia's struggle to avoid execution -- and receive a fair trial -- connects with recent movement to destroy *habeas corpus* by severely limiting the federal courts' ability to review, and reverse, capital punishment sentences imposed by state courts.

Three days before the talk, Weinglass petitioned the US Supreme Court (writ of certiorari) to examine Mumia's original trial, and decide if violations of federally protected rights occurred -- stemming from Judge Sabo's ruling that Mumia could not lead his own defense. Instead of granting Mumia's motion, Sabo appointed attorney Anthony Jackson to represent him. This caused Mumia to protest. And, instead of reconsidering his decision, Sabo had Mumia removed from the court, and did not allow him to monitor the proceedings, even during crucial moments in the trial. Denial of the right to represent one's self (pro se), denial of attorney of choice, and removal from court during a capital case without the means to keep pace with the trial, are clear violations of Mumia's Sixth Amendment rights. Will the Supreme Court see it that way?

Weinglass doubts that the Supreme Court will rule on the petition, as similar petitions are routinely rejected. However, he is quite sure that after the petition is denied, Pennsylvania Governor Ridge will sign a new Death Warrant for Mumia with an execution date. After the execution order is signed, Weinglass will petition the federal court in Philadelphia to stay the execution on the basis of habeas corpus. He expects the stay to be granted; afterwards, he predicts nothing.

Since 1977, when capital punishment was reinstated after a hiatus for Supreme Court review, federal courts have, according to Weinglass, reversed about 38% of the capital sentences. Most of these were overturned for grave violations of defendants' legal rights. And, as Mumia's legal team has made abundantly clear, Mumia's case is riddled with *grave violations* throughout. Therefore, it would seem that Mumia's conviction is ripe for a resounding reversal, and he be set free.

After the execution order is signed, Weinglass will petition the federal court in Philadelphia to stay the execution on the basis of habeas corpus. He expects the stay to be granted; afterwards, he predicts nothing.

But not so fast, said Weinglass. Under the Anti-Terrorist and Effective Death Penalty Act (EDPA), signed into law in the wake of the Oklahoma City bombing, federal courts are to accept violations of defendants' constitutional rights, as long as the state courts were not unreasonable. Also, under EDPA, all findings of fact by the state are not to be questioned by federal courts. Hence, the mountain of exculpatory evidence -- that Weinglass and the defense team have brought forward since 1992 -- may not be examined because Judge Sabo admitted nothing into the court record during the appeals process but let the original trial stand. The Pennsylvania Supreme Court unanimously ruled in Sabo's favor, as those judges were unable to find errors in any of the court proceedings, which started in 1982. The EDPA sounds like a prescription for legal lynchings to me.

Weinglass let it be known that the right of federal courts to review and rule on sentences imposed by state courts is written in the very Constitution -- not the Bill of Rights. So the EDPA is a direct attack on the legal rights of all American citizens. There are, he said, federal judges who do not recognize this intrusion by Congress. If luck is on Mumia's side, the habeas corpus review will go before constitutionalists. Unfortunately, there are judges who have fallen in lock-step with the new law, and a court packed with these sorts may hear his case, too. Did someone say "a crap shoot?"

An underlying message of Weinglass' talk was that the popular movement to save Mumia must not put its faith in the federal courts. Rather, people must demonstrate to the power elite that the execution of Mumia will come with an unacceptably high price.

Furthermore, Weinglass expressed, people should not count on the mainstream (corporate) media to be consistent and fair with Mumia. Sam Donaldson's hatchet job on ABC's *20/20* is a case in point. (Weinglass also mentioned that *Vanity Fair* recently interviewed him for an article, which he expects to be negative.) On a (perhaps) positive note, CBS's *60 Minutes* has offered to prepare for broadcast a story on Mumia to counter Donaldson's. This is an option the defense team has yet to rule on. But rather than putting one's faith in the fickle mass media, Weinglass encouraged other sorts of media. In response to a question about how to get local media involved, Weinglass said he particularly liked a slogan he saw on a building in New York City. It read, "If Mumia Dies, Your City Fries!"

I recommend that people read Leonard Weinglass' book *Race for Justice* (Common Courage Press) and get a copy of Refuse and Resist's Resource Book on the Case of Mumia (305 Madison Ave #1166, NY, NY 10165). ♦

photos by Grace Cox

To Rep. Sanders: Follow the Moral Course on Kosovo

Ron Jacobs

This is the text of the comments I made to Rep. Bernie Sanders at a town meeting on the war in Yugoslavia, May 3, 1999 in Burlington, VT.

Good evening Bernie, first I commend you on your efforts to forge a framework for a peace agreement on your recent trip to Europe. However, I believe your efforts would be much more convincing if you had voted against support for the bombing. In addition, judging from a number of conversations I have had, I also believe many Vermonters cannot believe you support the bombing of Yugoslavia and Iraq. We've heard tonight how the war affects the people of the region. I would like to talk briefly about how it will affect Americans, especially if a ground war begins.

My dad was in the military for thirty years. I lived and traveled with him as his dependent for 19 of those years. My family enjoyed the immersion into other cultures and the incredible places we got to live: Pakistan, Germany, and Turkey, to name a few. These experiences made the lives of my siblings and I much more interesting than many of our friends who always lived in the same town. That was the up side.

Because he was in the military, however, we also got used to him leaving to parts unknown for weeks at a time. Whenever there was a crisis, it seemed he headed there, including to Vietnam. I know the feeling of wondering every day whether or not he would come back alive and, if he did, how different would he be. I know what it's like to hear that the base he was stationed at had been attacked and waiting for what seemed like forever to hear via a telegram that he was okay. I know what it's like to have him finally come back physically whole, but with an emotional and spiritual vacuum where there had once been a smile. And I know what it's like to view the man who taught me that one should love your neighbor as you do yourself as a hypocrite and accomplice to mass murder.

I don't want my son and his friends to see their generation destroyed by a war they don't want. I don't want their dreams to be dashed because of a few men and women who don't have the creativity or the will to solve the problems of humankind without weapons of mass destruction.

I don't want this to happen again to the generation my son belongs to. I don't want these young people to wonder—as my friends and I did—whether or not we would be drafted and, if we were, whether we would go into the Army or to somewhere safe. I don't want my son and his friends to see their generation destroyed by a war they don't want. I don't want their dreams to be dashed because of a few men and women who don't have the creativity or the will to solve the problems of humankind without weapons of mass destruction. No, I want them to have hope for the future.

That's why I've supported you, Bernie—because you seemed to understand that the ways of the past have not solved the problems we face. Indeed, many of those problems are greater than ever. Yet, you've been willing to look at these problems differently than your cohorts and actually convinced some of them to see things in a new light, as well. Let me provide a couple examples of what I mean. You know that sweatshop labor is wrong and you've done something about it. You know that too many American workers do not make a livable wage and you've worked towards correcting that, too. You know that the elderly and the young are being left out of the picture corporate America is trying to fit us into and you're working on that.

So how can you support this cynical destruction of a land and its people from the skies? There is little difference between the destruction that a land mine causes and that which a bomb dropped from the sky causes, especially when those bombs are encased in radioactive material. In addition, it is those very same corporations that you oppose for, among other things, exporting their operations overseas, who will ultimately benefit from this war. Bill Clinton did say (and I quote): "If we're going to have a strong economic relationship that includes our ability to sell around the world, Europe has got to be key. . . That's what this Kosovo thing is all about."

You say the issue is complex. I agree—in part. However, one aspect is very, very simple. Do you believe killing people is an acceptable, moral way to enforce policy or not? If you don't, then you should do everything in your power to halt funding for this murderous air campaign (and any other war action(s)). If you do, then one can only hope that you can find some cozy place with your new friends—those men and women that profit from death—those whom Bob Dylan calls the masters of war. ♦

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Death by discrimination

Skin Colour Influences Who Lives and Dies in the US Judicial System

Amnesty International

United States: African Americans are being killed by the United States government after being condemned to death by a judicial system infected by racial prejudice, a new Amnesty International report says.

"Today, whether you live or die in the USA as a result of your crimes appears to be largely determined by the colour of your own skin and the race of your victim," said Pierre Sani, Amnesty International's Secretary General, during the launch of the report, adding that "the Federal authorities are unwilling to act because of the popularity of the death penalty."

The report, Killing with Prejudice: Race and the Death Penalty in the USA -- launched in Ghana to coincide with the Fifth African - African American Summit in Accra --highlights the fact that racial discrimination, while more subtle than in the past, continues to play an equally deadly role in the US legal system.

Amnesty International has repeatedly brought the racist use of the death penalty to the attention of the US authorities over many years, but has been ignored or told that the problem does not exist. The organization continues to challenge the US authorities to ensure that the equal rights guaranteed by the US Constitution become a reality for all its citizens.

"Visibly racist symbols like the 1950s "Whites Only" signs would today seem abhorrent to most people in the US, yet they silently witness a more subtle racism that is deeply ingrained in the system presiding over the ever increasing chain of executions of African Americans," Pierre Sani said.

The report cites numerous ways in which racial prejudice can infect a capital trial: prosecutors seek the death penalty more often, or in some cases solely, against blacks; jurors openly use racism terms while deliberating whether a defendant should live or die; prospective jurors are denied the opportunity to sit in judgement on their peers because of their colour; judges make racist statements.

Recent research into the attitudes of jurors in capital cases sheds a disturbing light on a process which may be far less impartial than the requirements of justice demand. It shows that ethnic bias does not always stop at the door of the jury room. Comments made under anonymity by some jurors included: "He (the defendant) was a big man who looked like a criminal... He was big and black and kind of ugly. So I guess, when I saw him I thought this fits the part".

Statistical evidence overwhelmingly shows that the judicial system values white life over black: defendants are far more likely to be executed for the murder of a white victim. Of the 500 prisoners executed between 1977 and end of 1998, more than 81 per cent were convicted of the murder of a white, even though blacks and whites are the victims of homicide in almost equal numbers nationwide.

The odds of a death sentence in cases in which blacks killed whites has been shown to be as much as 11 times higher than in the murder of a black victim by a white person.

"Despite the overwhelming evidence to the contrary, authorities in the USA firmly deny that the use of the death penalty is in any way influenced by racial prejudice," Mr Sani said. Their denials follow execution after execution that have racial overtones. Most recently, Manny Babbitt was put to death on 4 May 1999; yet another black man killed for the murder of a white victim, convicted by an all-white jury.

... discrimination in the criminal justice system is not limited solely to black people; prejudice also applies to Latinos, Native Americans, Asian Americans, Arab Americans and others.

"Most officials with whom we have talked would likely accept that instances of racial discrimination are an everyday occurrence in US society, yet -- even when confronted by undisputable evidence -- few are willing to acknowledge its contamination of the capital judicial system."

"This refusal of the US authorities to admit and address the fact that the death penalty is being applied on the basis of race, ethnicity and social status is a key indication of the extent of the problem," Mr Sani stressed.

While the report primarily addresses prejudice against the African American community in the USA, it also makes clear that discrimination in the criminal justice system is not limited solely to black people; prejudice also applies to Latinos, Native Americans, Asian Americans, Arab Americans and others.

"What we want to highlight today is that racial discrimination pervades the US death penalty at every stage of the process," Mr Sani stressed. "Any political leadership which can ignore this reality is incapable of instituting meaningful reforms."

"There is only one way to eradicate ethnic bias, and the echoes of racism, from death penalty procedures in the USA -- and this is by eradicating the death penalty itself," Mr Sani concluded.

Amnesty International, International Secretariat, 1 Easton Street, WC1X 8DJ, London, United Kingdom ♦

Books To Prisoner Page

Racial Bias Permeates the System

Death row in the U.S. has always held a disproportionately large population of people of color relative to the general population. Whereas African Americans constitute 12% of the U.S. population, they are 35% of those on death row; 9% are Native American, Latino or Asian. The most important factor in levying the death penalty, however, is the race of the victim. (Those who kill a white person are more likely to receive the death penalty than those who kill a black person.)

For example, in Florida, in comparable cases, "a defendant's odds of receiving a death sentence are 4.8 times higher if the victim was white than if the victim was black. In Illinois the multiplier is 4, in Oklahoma it is 4.3, in North Carolina, 4.4, and in Mississippi, it is 5.5."

The state of Kentucky presents a particularly outrageous example of race-of-victim discrimination: despite the fact that 1,000 African Americans have been murdered there since the 1975 reinstitution of the death penalty in that state, as of spring 1999, all of the state's 39 death row inmates were sentenced for murdering a white victim; none were there for murdering an African American.

Several studies show the effects of outright racial discrimination. One recent example, a 1998 University of Iowa study of sentencing in Philadelphia, showed that the odds of receiving a death sentence are nearly 3.9 times greater if the defendant is African American.

These patterns of racial disparities are partly explained by the fact that the nation's prosecutors, who make the threshold decision about whether or not to seek the death penalty are almost exclusively white men. Of the district attorneys in U.S. counties using capital punishment, 98% are white, and only 1% are African American. New York State has only one African American district attorney. --A.C.L.U.

Books to Prisoners June Events

- Open drop in work/training sessions every Thurs. 3-9 pm in the back of Bulldog News. *Training takes 1 hour. Once you are trained you can work anytime Bulldog is open.*
- **BTP Volunteer Potluck** - 3rd Sun. of the month (June 19th), 3 pm at 116 E. 4th Ave, Olympia
- Turn in Bayview and Ralph's receipts. B to P receives 1%. Please send to the address below.
- **Save UPC code from Western Family Products &** send to B to P, 116 E 4th Ave, Olympia, WA 98501

Attention Prisoners

***W.I.P.* seeks articles, artwork (black and white is best) from those in prison.**

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13 Lucky Tips for Activists

Errol Schweitzer

Inevitable Disclaimer: This column is not meant to offend hard-working activists who are devoting much of their time and energy to social and environmental issues. It is meant as a critique of those qualities that may keep us from building an actual Movement. I know of many activists that are guilty of the things listed below, including myself. So please don't feel offended (which brings us to our first point...)

I - Have a sense of humor. (Comedic logic is superior to tragic logic -CB)

The world is not going to change overnight, no matter how hard you work. Take time out to laugh at how messed up things really are. Take time out to laugh at yourself and the incremental changes that you and others are striving so hard for. A good chuckle now and then keeps things in perspective and may actually make you feel better about the work you have accomplished. Making fun of yourself and other activists may be a form of critique, and we all know that...

II - Critique is necessary and vital for activism.

Analyzing what went wrong and what went right about an action or a campaign may help you to not repeat the same mistakes twice. Listen to what others outside your group have to say, especially the opposition, which may be the perfect foil for your cause. Many great activists and revolutionaries engaged in rigorous self-criticism to realize what they did right or wrong. Luckily, unlike Che or Durruti, we don't have to do it under a hail of bullets (at least not yet).

III - Treat everyone as individuals.

It irks me when Marxists and anarchists refer to "the masses" or when anti-corporate activists refer to their peers as "MTV kids." By lumping people into faceless categories we forget that we are dealing with people who have reasons for believing the things they do, whether it is family upbringing, the influence of religion or state propaganda, or just growing up in this damn culture. When you approach people as individuals, you remember that once upon a time you, too may not have had the beliefs you do now and may have been alienated by how some activists can come off when trying to spread their message. And so, the most important aspect of reaching out to people may not be what you have to say but actually to...

IV - Listen to what others have to say and know your audience.

Sometimes people's responses to what you have to say may be the best guide for learning what you shouldn't do next time. When you know who you are speaking to, you can craft your message it appeals to them. This is something the Christian Right learned long ago in their direct mail campaigns. For example: By knowing your audience you can personalize the issue so that is not some abstract cause that they cannot relate to their everyday experience. If you are talking about immigrants' rights to some middle class white people, you can preface your point by mentioning "Imagine if this had happened to your grandparents when they were trying to escape the (famines, wars, genocide, intolerance) that brought them here." If you are talking to some kids on the street about how McDonalds is fucked up, don't just dwell on the facts that they kill millions of animals every year and use beef grown on former rainforest land. Many of the kids in my neighborhood can relate to the fact that McD's pays bad wages and makes you work long, grueling hours.

IVa. - And oh yeah... ditch the highfalutin lingo! If you insist on "subsuming the other" and "deconstructing the privileged hegemonies of socioeconomic systems" then don't expect much of a response. If you know your audience then you can talk to them at their level, not Foucault's. Besides, those big words are a privilege of those lucky enough to have been college educated and can set up an uncomfortable power dynamic. What's the use of promoting social change when you convey it in an elitist fashion?

V - And stop screaming all the time!

Yeah, we're pissed off but if we are always screaming AT people instead of talking to them, then they won't listen. So before you go to a protest, go work out or jog or something. You'd be surprised how people respond when you talk politely to them. There IS a time for anger, and then there is a time for discussion. So think before you scream.

People who consider themselves "activists" have to break out the preconceived molds and listen to what people are really talking about.

VI - Single-issue activism can be problematic.

While we all have certain issues that are closest to our hearts, we shouldn't close our minds to the possible interconnections between these issues or stop from examining how they may have similar historic roots. Sometimes single-issue activism can be very detrimental, such as how some environmentalists echo right-wing propaganda about immigration or how some anti-racist activists are just as homophobic as the KKK.

VII - Having progressive politics does not exempt you from being an asshole.

There are more than a few "progressive" people who are sexist pigs or hold some pretty questionable ideas about race and class. And activists can be just as cliquey and backstabbing as frat-people. The redeeming thing is that at least by getting involved the door is open for talking about these issues, right???

VIII - You can't save the world via e-mail.

Your computer is a product of the techno-capitalist system and whatever good you do with it does not equal the power it has given Corporate America. No matter how efficient, technology can never replace the power and intimacy of human communication and contact. The internet itself was designed by the Pentagon's Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency as a way to decentralize communications in the advent of nuclear war. And over 98% of the internet's usefulness has been in speeding up commerce for speculative investment by very wealthy people all over the world. Admittedly, the internet has increased our communications and has helped to make progressive movements more globally linked; the Zapatistas may have been crushed if not for the e-mail updates they sent out during their uprising. But we can't rely on techno-activism all the time. And one other thing: Y2K.

IX - Leave the "ism's" at home.

"So that's nice. You are a (insert typical social change label here)." To most people who don't share these beliefs, these labels are loaded with media stereotypes and corporate propaganda that demean the positive aspects that these labels carry for you and me. For example, after saying to someone "I am a multiculturalist," he responded with "So you hate white people?" Instead, I should have said, "I believe in seeing race as a historical construct; it is not real in any physical or biological sense, but people are manipulated into believing that it is and treating it so." And maybe that would have spurred some lively discussion. So before you announce yourself as some left-wing "ism-ist", consider what may be going on in someone else's head about what you label yourself. Just think of what you considered a "communist" or "anarchist" before you became so enlightened; what do most people hear about these terms from the media? Let your actions define you, not your "ism's"

X - Lifestyle fascism sucks.

A major problem with many activists is instead of personalizing the political, they politicize the personal. Finding flaws in other people's lifestyles becomes something of a hobby for many progressive-types, instead of identifying and deconstructing the institutions that are the source of violence against humans, animals and the environment. It is an easy way out of making real change happen by just attacking this or that consumption pattern. What we need to remember is that by identifying certain aspects of Western lifestyle, such as meat-eating, smoking, or not boycotting the latest trendy issue, we are forgetting that it is the whole damn system that is wrong. Our power is more than our pocketbooks alone. To make real change we need to organize and find things that more of us have in common, not alienate others because they don't conform to some lifestyle guidelines. Why recapitulate the authoritarian tactics of the Christian Right or corporate America? Let people decide for themselves what they can or cannot boycott and get off the moral soapbox.

XI - Ha! Ha! Ha! You're gonna burnout!

Few things hurt our causes as much as exhaustion and the implosion of those who have just "had enough." You make bad decisions, you alienate friends and family, your personal hygiene takes a nosedive. You know what? You need a break! Take a nap, paint a picture, do something to relax your mind and body. Let your energy and zeal come back. Activism is tough and victories can be few and far between, so learn and take it easy. Even Assata Shakur says that the most important thing is to grow personally, to maintain relationships and hobbies. The revolution doesn't need zombies or robots. It needs people.

XII - Stop the sectarianism!

Of course, this is like asking for tropical weather in Binghamton, but hey, might as well. From petty internecine squabbles at the local Food Coop to writers of "The Nation" insisting there are two (or more) "Left's", the movement has fractured and fragmented into so many little cliques and ideologies that you wonder what we have in common anymore other than our dislike for each other. While some of the bitterness is left over from past counterinsurgency operations, such as the FBI's Cointelpro and the CIA's MH Chaos, a good deal of it is just because of activists who have split due to personal disagreements and arguments over ideology and strategy. Wherever I have been, it always seems like this one doesn't like that one, that group betrayed the cause, this one is a sellout, that one is too extreme, etc. As dismaying as this is, there are still so many people working for change that I must ask: can't we agree on certain vital things? Do we have at least a common enemy? Can we forget our differences and actually work towards some sort of consensus so that we stop shooting ourselves in the feet? If you are new to activism, stay above the pettiness and concentrate on the issues at hand. If you are from the old school, then us young folks need your experience, not your gripes and grudges.

XIII - Redefine activism.

Activism is an accepted cultural niche in our society. C'mon, we all know the stereotypes: bad dresser, self-righteous about this or that issue, screaming and chanting, holding up signs, getting dragged away by cops, etc. But by becoming part of this "activist" culture we alienate many whose side we are supposedly on. How many people can relate when they see media-bites of these "wackos?" How often do we feed these stereotypes? But look what is happening. More and more people fighting for social change are just "regular" people: a one-day general strike by NYC cabbies in May virtually shut down the city; thousands gathered to demonstrate against anti-gay violence in NY this October; recent general strikes in Puerto Rico and Colombia had hundreds of thousands of participants; 40,000 construction workers in NYC protesting non-union contracts, etc. And then there are the selfless acts we will never hear about: people forming support groups and discussion groups; people identifying who they are and where they fit into this society; people choosing to boycott some product or lifestyle, when and if they can. These are just people responding to the basic stimulus that their lives are being fucked with and they are not going to sit back and take it. These are activists as well. This is how revolutions come about. People who consider themselves "activists" have to break out the preconceived molds and listen to what people are really talking about. Anarchism, multiculturalism, feminism, communism, veganism are all just words until our actions give them real meaning and we define for ourselves what our activism really is. Until then, activism is going to be this small, accepted, ineffectual cultural niche that alienates the people who it is supposed to be reaching out to. ♦

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(Fascists, continued)

•Pete Peters, a Christian Identity radio preacher, who is credited with launching the U.S. militia movement in the '90s.

These political influences provide the backdrop for the Columbine killings. While the adult leaders of some of these groups generally limit their hatemongering to words, young people are more likely to use fists, knives, guns, Doc Marten boots, and bombs.

The prescription for the political illness of fascism is education and community mobilization against the Hitlerites and in support of all those targeted by them.

Teachers, school administrators, students and parents need to recognize and talk frankly about the dangers posed by fascist organizers in their midst or on the internet. When youth come to school in swastika-emblazoned clothes, the response should be teach-ins and school assemblies on what Nazism means and why the whole student body has an interest in taking a stand against racism, sexism, homophobia, anti-Semitism, anti-communism, and ultra-nationalism.

White supremacist recruiters and Nazi bands should be met by community protests and rallies. United Front Against Fascism, a Seattle-based coalition of unionists, feminists, people of color, Jews, gays and radicals, has picketed numerous white supremacist events over the last 10 years. Most recently, KKK recruiters in Auburn were exposed and Michael Moynihan's Nazi rockers in Blood Axis were forced to cancel Seattle and European appearances because of UFAF publicity and protests.

In order to prevent future massacres here or abroad, let us honor the dead at Littleton with a growing determination to combat the fascists who are trying to recruit our children.

Guerry Hoddersen is co-founder of Seattle's United Front Against Fascism and an analyst of modern fascist movements in the United States and Europe. ♦

Welfare Rights Organizing Coalition Summer Economics Workshops

This summer, the Olympia chapter of the Welfare Rights Organizing Coalition plans to sponsor a free series of participatory economics workshops that will be open to the entire community and that we hope will lead to a process of cooperative learning, discussion, and organizing for social justice.

"Corporate Power and the American Dream: Toward an Economic Agenda for Working People" is a series of workshops designed to bring people together to explore the economic and environmental crises that we are facing, to develop proposals for addressing them, and to train participants to become "worker-educators" who are able to conduct workshops for others. The workshops were created by organizers and teachers working with unions and with the Labor Party.

The problems that we are facing are probably familiar to most readers of Works in Progress: Despite steady economic growth, real wages for low-income workers in Washington State are barely increasing after falling dramatically through the late 1970's and 1980's, working conditions and hours are becoming increasingly harsh, and poverty rates in Washingon remain about the same. The poverty rate for children in Washington was around 15% in 1995, slightly higher than in 1989, when it was around 14.5%. For many people, poverty is becoming deeper, as the government cuts public benefits and imposes work requirements on welfare recipients. This July, Washington State will demand that single parents who are receiving welfare benefits—mainly single mothers—return to work when their children are three months old. Economic collapses throughout the world, which the World Bank and International Monetary Fund promised would be temporary, seem to be permanent features of the new economic order; and an increasing number of people are coming from Mexico and other countries to seek work in communities like Shelton and Centralia, where, as undocumented immigrants, they are denied basic human rights. The ecological crises that we are facing seem overwhelming-climate change, the exhaustion of resources, the increasing pervasiveness of toxic waste.... At the same time, according to an article in the May 10th edition of the *Seattle Times*: "a computer analysis of [the construction of new] single-family homes with more than 10,000 square feet indicates the Seattle area is going through its biggest mega-house splurge ever, reflecting wealth accumulation that hasn't been seen since the turn of the last century."

What is going on in our economy? How are decisions about our economic and social policies made? Whose interests do they reflect, and how do they affect our lives and the lives of people around the world? How can we begin to understand the complex problems that we face and to gain democratic control over the decisions that affect us?

The workshops use the "Small Group Activity Method." Instead of asking people to listen to lectures, they put "the learner in the center of the workshop." According to the Oil, Chemical, and Atomic Workers union, "Participants are put to work in the workshop, solving real-life problems, building upon their own skills and experiences....We learn by doing." In each workshop, participants work in groups of five or six people to complete a set of tasks-to respond to statements, to answer questions, and to make judgements on key issues. Each group selects one member to take notes and to report back to the entire workshop; after the groups complete their work, the report-back person explains to the entire group how they dealt with the problems and what conclusions they drew. The workshop is then thrown open to general discussion. Finally the trainer summarizes the discussion, restating key points, highlighting unresolved questions, and suggesting perspectives that have not been covered. We hope that the workshops will be valuable for people with widely varying backgrounds and knowledge of history, politics, and economics. Rita Shaw, a member of the Labor Party in Seattle who has been an organizer and activist for several decades, will be the faciliator.

Some of the issues that the workshops will address include: income inequality and wealth distribution, unions, wage regulations, welfare and other social benefits, taxes, international trade, and finance, and immigration. We will focus in particular on issues facing low-income parents in Southwestern Washington.

We would like to be able to repeat these workshops or to create new ones whenever needed. Our main goal is to help people to gain confidence in their ability to work together to understand and shape the world, and we hope that the process that the workshops use will be useful in many different contexts. In the long term, we believe that a social justice movement with the ability to create large-scale changes in the way our society works cannot emerge without an enormous amount of public education and discussion.

There will be nine or ten workshops, each lasting between 2 and 4 hours. We will provide free childcare at each session. People are welcome to attend any of the workshops that they are interested in, but we are hoping to gather together at least a small group of people who can commit to attending most or all of them and to learning how to facilitate the workshops themselves. We have not yet planned a schedule-please let us know if you are interested in attending so that we can make a schedule that meets the needs of the largest number of people possible. We are hoping to begin late in June.

If you would like to come to the workshops, or you have any questions or suggestions, please call WROC at (360)352-9716, or write to us at wrocoly@juno.com ♦

ARE LEGISLATORS GUILTY OF ENDANGERING INFANTS?

Parents who are members of WROC, the Welfare Rights Organizing Coalition, would say yes.

About 25 parents, children and allies spent the first day of the special session at the Capitol Building. While children nibbled crackers and played with games, parents talked with legislators in an attempt to educate them on the importance of Senate Bill 5163. We were stunned at how little our lawmakers knew about this issue. Members of the House of Representatives complained that if they allowed this issue on the floor, they would have to look at other issues and that would be like opening a can of worms. They also said the budget was already approved so there was nothing they could do. When WROC members told them that the cost of not passing this bill would be $13 million that was not included in the present budget, they cleared their throats and had somewhere they needed to be.

At present, WorkFirst allows parents with infants up to 12 months an exemption from the work requirement in order to stay home and care for their infants if they choose. However, on July 1st, the exemption will change to three months. Recognizing that there is virtually no infant day care available at rates that low-income parents can afford, the Department of Social and Health Services asked the legislature to pass SB5163 which would keep the age limit at 12 months. Last month, however, the legislature adjourned without putting the bill to a vote. Over 4.000 families now face the possibility of being "sanctioned"-having their welfare grant cut by 40%--for failing comply with the state's work requirement if they are unable to find child care.

Although DSHS has written policy that allows caseworkers to defer parents from the work requirement if they are unable to find child care, the agency does not seem to have deferred anyone so far. A member of WROC spent several hours last week calling policy makers at DSHS to ask how many people have been deferred, and what a parent would have to do in order to prove that they were unable to find child care, but no one at the agency was able to answer any of his questions. Parents facing difficulties in getting this deferral should call WROC at 352-9716.

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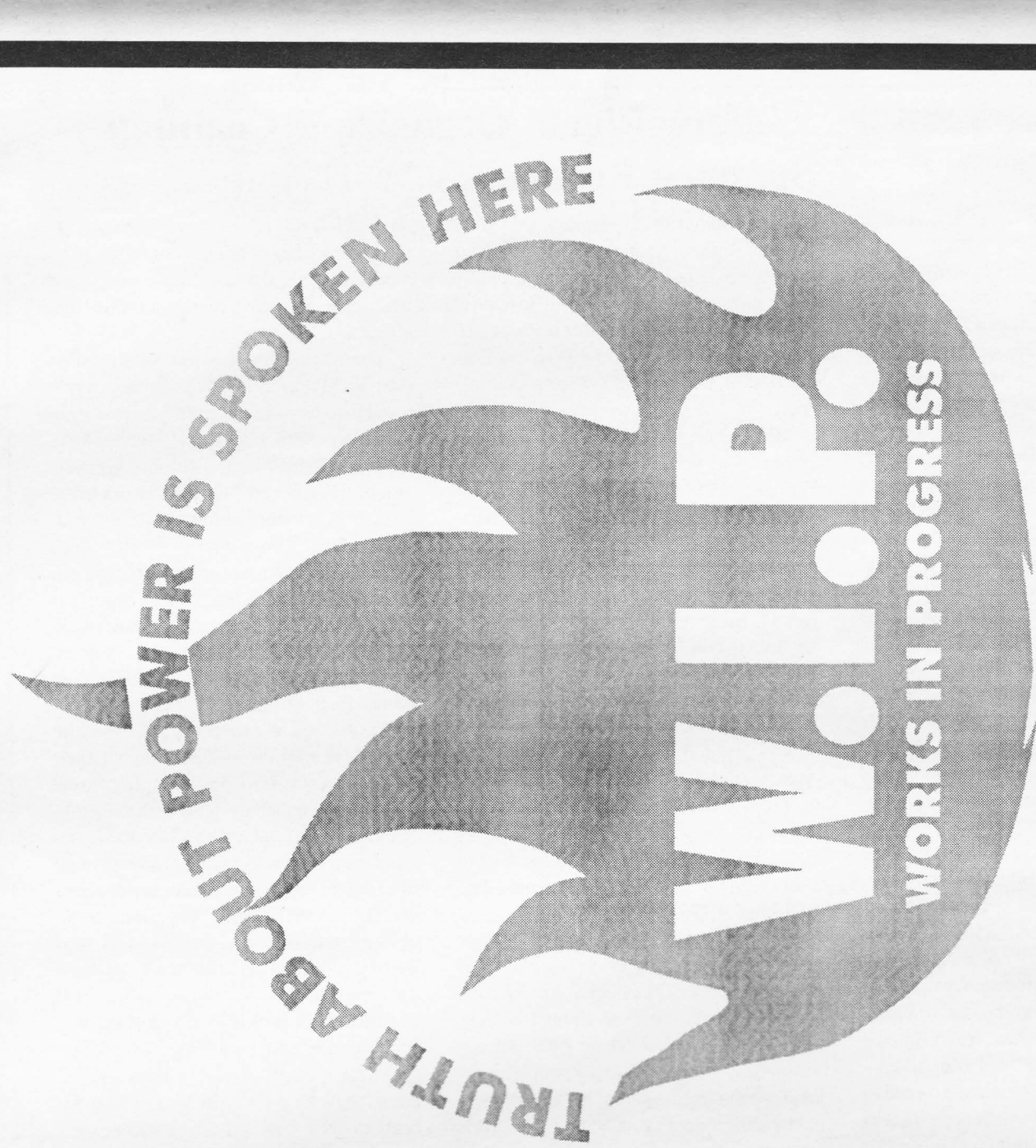


Winning design by Krist Munson.
Thanks to Amy Love, Billy Purcell and Anonymous for submitting designs!

Our New Tee-Shirt Design!

1 **Makah Affirmation & Ignored Teenage Fascists**

4 **Along the Color Line Racial Profiling**

5 **Scorching Summer Reading List**

6-7 **The Mumia Spread w/pictures**

8 **Urging Morality In Kosovo**

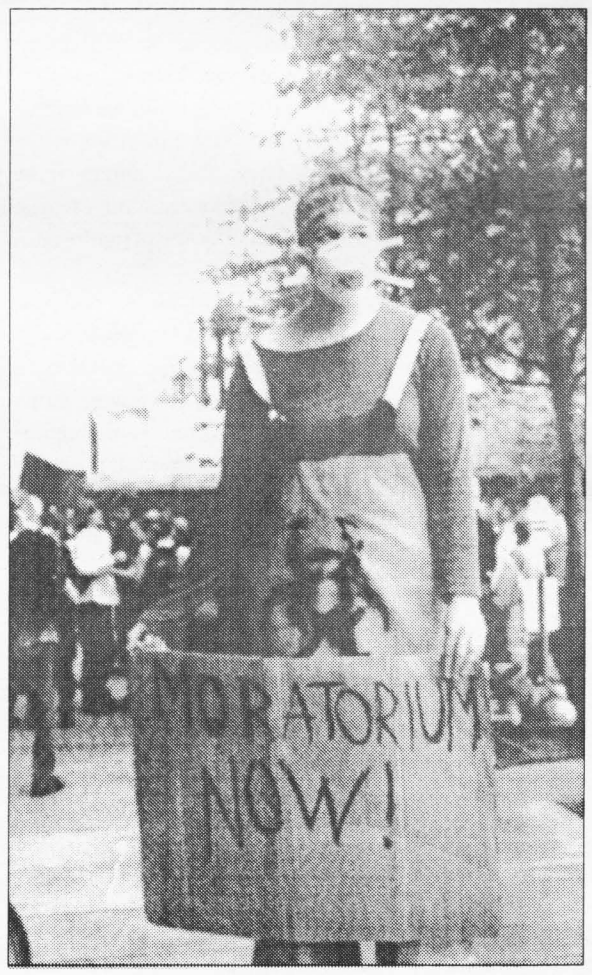
9 **Prison Interest Page**

10 **13 Tips for Activists**

11 **Summer Workshops**

Scenes from the Bio-Technology Protest in Seattle. See page 3 for more information.

photos by hali panneton



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